

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 SCCT-01 CU-02 EUR-12 SCS-03

SCA-01 SY-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

SP-02 SS-15 /070 R

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APPROVED BY: AF:NDAVIS

AF/C: WLCUTLER

S/PRS: RFUNSETH

S/CCT: RAFEAREY

AF/P: JMPOPE

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O 052258Z JUN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 131853

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (SMITH, HUNTER)

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPED AMERICANS: PRESS GUIDANCE

REF: A) DAR 1914; B) DAR 1918; C) BUJUMBURA 397;
D) KINSHASA 4810

1. DEPT IS STRONGLY OF VIEW THAT THIS IS NOT RPT NOT GOOD
TIME TO PROVIDE ANY SPECIFICS TO PRESS RE ONGOING EFFORTS
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TO COMMUNICATE WITH ABDUCTORS, PARTICULARLY WHEN THESE EF-

FORTS APPEAR TO BE ON VERGE OF SOME SUCCESS.

2. IN PARTICULAR, WE BELIEVE THAT ALL PARTIES CONCERNED SHOULD REFRAIN FROM NAMING VAGNI OR ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL WHO MAY BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED AS INTERMEDIARY WITH PRP GROUP. SUCH EXPOSURE LIKELY TO RESULT IN ALL-OUT EFFORT BY PRESS TO CONTACT SUCH INDIVIDUAL AND DO GREAT DAMAGE TO HIS ABILITY TO PERFORM THIS KEY ROLE EFFECTIVELY.

3. WE BELIEVE THERE IS MUCH BETTER CHANCE OF OBTAINING RELEASE OF STUDENTS MORE QUICKLY AND OF MAINTAINING FULL COOPERATION OF GOZ IN PARTICULAR, BUT OTHER GOVTS AS WELL, IF NEGOTIATIONS CAN BE CONDUCTED PRIVATELY. EVEN THOUGH GOZ HAS GIVEN ITS CONDITIONAL APPROVAL TO OUR PROCEEDING WITH VAGNI MISSION AND HAS TOLD US IT WILL COOPERATE FULLY,

WE THINK THEIR ATTITUDE COULD EASILY CHANGE IF PUBLIC ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON ANY ACTIVITY IN ZAIRE.

4. FINALLY, IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT NOTHING BE SAID RE USG'S INABILITY TO PAY RANSOM SINCE SUCH STATEMENT AT THIS DELICATE TIME MIGHT TRIGGER HOSTILE ACT AGAINST CAPTIVES. IT IS NOT DESIRABLE, AS GUIDANCE PROPOSED BY DAR SUGGESTS, TO SAY ANYTHING PUBLICLY ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF PARENTS' OR STANFORD UNIVERSITY'S PAYING RANSOM. SUCH STATEMENT MIGHT WELL PROMPT GOZ REFUSAL TO CONTINUE TO EXTEND NEEDED COOPERATION.

5. IN SHORT, DEPT BELIEVES THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO KEEP PRESS LID ON TO EXTENT POSSIBLE. WE AGREE WITH EMBASSY BUJUMBURA COMMENT (PARA 4 REFTEL C) THAT ALL PUBLIC NEEDS TO KNOW AT PRESENT IS THAT "OUR EFFORTS AT SECURING RELEASE OF PRISONERS ARE UNREMITTING AND PURPOSEFUL.,

6. FOLLOWING CONFIRMATION FROM KINSHASA THAT SEC'Y LETTER DELIVERED AND GOZ ON BOARD, POSTS MAY SAY, ON IF-ASKED BASIS ONLY:

QUOTE - UNREMITTING EFFORTS ARE CONTINUING IN THE ATTEMPT
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TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE THREE KIDNAPPED STUDENTS AND ALL CONCERNED AUTHORITIES ARE COOPERATING TO THIS END. THE FIRST STEP SEEMS TO BE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THOSE HOLDING THE STUDENTS, AND STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO DO SO. AS YOU CAN UNDERSTAND, THIS IS A VERY DELICATE SITUATION AND WE WISH TO SAY OR DO NOTHING WHICH MIGHT JEOPARDIZE THESE EFFORTS OR WHICH MIGHT ENDANGER THE STUDENTS. WE THEREFORE CANNOT COMMENT FURTHER. UNQUOTE.

7. TO A QUESTION RE STEINER, POSTS MAY RESPOND: QUOTE
MR. PETER STEINER IS REMAINING IN BUJUMBURA WHERE HE IS

REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF THE PARENTS AND OF STANFORD
UNIVERSITY. UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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Draft Date: 05 JUN 1975
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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TAGS: CASC, PFOR, US, CG, TZ, (SMUTS, BARBARA), (SMITH, KENNETH STEVE), (HUNTER, CARRIE), (ALI, MOHAMED)
To: DAR ES SALAAM BUJUMBURA
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